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Rick Webster

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
Dayton Music History Project
Interview with Rick Webster, June 6, 2019

Interview Information

Interview date: June 6, 2019

Interviewer: Chris Wydman (CW)

Interviewee: Rick Webster (RW)

Interview Transcript

Chris Wydman: Alright, my name is Chris Wydman, and we're here today to talk to Rick Webster as part of the Dayton Music History Project we're doing here at Wright State. Today is June 6, 2019. Rick, Rick Webster. What was it, Ricky T?

Rick Webster: Ricky Top. Yeah, Ricky T. Webster.

CW: Yeah. And Ozzy.

RW: Ozzy. Yeah. Been there.

CW: Alright, so you're from Dayton?

RW: Dayton, Ohio.

CW: Alright, where'd you grow up?

RW: Belmont area – I went to Belmont Elementary and then Belmont High School.

CW: Alright, that's a common theme. Apparently there's some good music happening in Belmont.

RW: Oh, rock. That was the rock station, right there in Belmont.

CW: Right, right.

RW: If you didn't play the guitar, you didn't belong in Belmont [*laughs*].

CW: Right, right. So, are both your parents from Dayton, or where were they from?

RW: My mother was from Pomeroy, Ohio – very religious type of person.

CW: Okay.

RW: Had Indian in her, she had Cherokee – her family did. And my father was in Dayton. They met when he came home from leave on the army – World War II.

CW: He was in World War II?

RW: Uh-huh, and the Korean War. They met through some friends and stayed together ever since.

CW: Right, right.

RW: My mom, now she could sing. She always – well they made a record, a 45', and I heard that over and over again as a kid. I always thought, "That could be improved some" [*laughs*], you know – put some rock to this.

CW: Did they do that when you were a kid or had they already done that?

RW: They had already done that, yeah.

CW: What kind of music was it?

RW: It was a jazz type of music - I guess that's what you'd call it back then.

CW: Right, right.

RW: Or more of an upbeat type of music. It was pretty cool – really for my mom.

CW: Oh that's cool, that's cool.

RW: My dad, he could play a little bit of guitar. I remember wanting a guitar for Christmas, and I got one, and lo and behold I could play. Never had a lesson –

CW: Just by ear?

RW: Just by ear – I could hear something and start playing.

CW: Right, right.

RW: It might not have been correct note for note, but it was close.

CW: Sounded similar?

RW: And my dad started taking me to bars [*laughs*] – the bars he used to always stop at, and he'd get a free beer, and get free peanuts or something, you know – pop or something, you know. All I had to do is play and sing a little bit – and that was when I was in kindergarten, five years old.

CW: So in kindergarten you were already playing where you could get up in front of people?

RW: Yeah, yeah. Actually in kindergarten my teacher's name was Miss Benz – show and tell I brought my guitar –

CW: When was this about? What year?

RW: Oh jeez...1956 – '57.

CW: '56 - '57.

RW: Yeah [*laughs*].

CW: So how did she know?

RW: Well, show and tell – I brought my guitar.

CW: Alright.

RW: And my dog followed me to school [*laughs*].

CW: [*Laughs*].

RW: And the dog got more attention than I did. My mom had to come get my dog and my teacher asked me if I could play, and I sang “Sugar in the Morning”, and [*singing*] “sugar in the evening, sugar at supper time”. Anyways, I played it and –

CW: And was this in front of the class?

RW: Yeah, in front of the class. So that week my teacher asked me if I wouldn't mind entertaining on stage. My parents and everybody came and I got up on stage and I did it. And that was my first actual stage presentation – was in kindergarten.

CW: So, that was a really good show and tell.

RW: Yeah, it was great [*laughs*]. And the girls back then [*laughs*] chased me around the sand box and around the classroom –

CW: Six years old?

RW: Yeah [*laughing*].

CW: You got groupies.

RW: Yeah I'm thinking, "This ain't really too bad". I was a kid, I didn't know anything. It was fun, you know.

CW: Yeah.

RW: By the time –

CW: So was that the first time you started to get an idea that "This is something I'm really into"

RW: Yeah, yeah. My uncles down in Pomeroy, now they was preachers, and they would sing – head of choir. And my one uncle – Uncle Clarence, Andrew was his name, now he was mayor, chief of police – he was everything down in Pomeroy. But he lived on top a hill – there was a big holler and he'd roll his piano out on the front porch, and you could hear him play all through the holler down through town. And that was great.

CW: And what kind of music was this? Like church music?

RW: Church music, yeah. Bluegrass, country – whatever he felt like playing, that's what we learned. Maybe a little rock and roll in there, you know.

CW: Right, right.

RW: And he had an accordion laying there, and I picked it up and started playing it. I watched him on the keys and started playing.

CW: Wow, that's pretty impressive. It's one thing to play a few notes on a piano but to pick up an accordion and make it sound good...

RW: Yeah? That's what he thought, too. I enjoy music – It's been my life, all my life. And when we have family reunions or whatever, they're always throwing me a harmonica or something, "Hey Rick, play us some music" and I do it. I just enjoyed music. Not so much just having an audience but I'll tell you what, after all these years, it was great. I mean it was great then, and I love watching people smile, and laugh, and clap. Their enjoyment at what I can do – that was a big, big deal.

CW: Right, right. Seeing a big smile on people's face –

RW: Yeah, I loved it. I said, [*Laughing*] "This is what I got to do for a living." My father kept saying, "Rick, I'm going to tell you something son. As long as I can play the radio, and get it for free – you're not going to make no money" [*laughs*]. I said, "Okay, dad." So it was about 1972, my dad was getting ready to retire from General Motors –

CW: Is that when you were a teenager?

RW: Oh yeah, seventeen – eighteen years old. And he seen this Riviera he wanted, and I knew right where it was at because whenever we took a ride we went off of Main Street to the Buick dealership and this car's going around in circles and he goes, "That's going to be mine one day." Well, I made that dream come true. I went in and bought the car for him. I said, "Dad, I got something out in the garage for you." He goes, "What do you got out in the garage?" He went out there – couldn't believe it. That car was actually so long

I actually bumped the front of it to try to get the garage door to come down. He could not believe that was that car. I said, “That’s what music will but you.”

CW: Were you still in high school?

RW: Yeah, yeah. I was getting ready to graduate.

CW: So you were already making money?

RW: Yeah, I was making pretty good money. Cash money then *[laughs]*.

CW: Well let’s circle back a little bit. So your first exposure to music – was it around your uncle or... What kind of music was playing in the house?

RW: Our house – it could be anything. My mom, she liked Elvis Presley – she liked rock and roll music. My dad – more country type music. Laid back, big band music.

CW: Did he play some guitar?

RW: Yeah, yeah. He could pick a little, not – he knew some chords.

CW: That’s where you got the inkling?

RW: I think so, yeah.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: I just went on from there. I took it to the max *[laughs]*.

CW: Yeah, yeah. So, let me see... So when you first started getting into music what kind of music was popular? So what – you were born in the early fifties?

RW: Yeah.

CW: So what was the first music you really started getting into?

RW: Do you remember the beach party movies?

CW: Yeah.

RW: Yeah, that type of music. So you got – what? Paul Anka –

CW: Right.

RW: So that type of music - and the Beach Boys, of course.

CW: So that surfer rock – who was that guitarist who just died who was famous for that surf rock, I forget his name.

RW: Oh, there was Jan and Dean.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: My mind slips, too. I made some cheat notes – wrote down some names so I wouldn't forget.

CW: Well, that's the one question nobody ever wants me to ask, you know. Because then it's like [*sighs*], you know. All the bands and all the names and all the people's names.

RW: And there was so many bands when I was a kid – every block there was two or three bands going on. If you got kicked out of one you'd just go next door, you went all the way around, you know?

CW: So after you had your school experience there, you know, got your guitar – you kept playing just on your own?

RW: Yeah.

CW: You said your dad started taking you around?

RW: My dad, when I was five to about eight or nine would take me to Kramer's *[laughs]*.

CW: Kramer's, really?

RW: Yeah, *[laughs]*.

CW: The one on Irving?

RW: The one on Irving, yeah. That's where he always used to get his check cashed – that was his bank *[laughs]*.

CW: *[Laughs]*

RW: He'd pull up there, "I got to stop at the bank", you know. "Get my check cashed".

CW: Get a twenty ounce while I'm at it *[laughs]*.

RW: He dragged me along, you know. From there we'd go to Joe's Bar and Grill there on Wilmington Pike, close to Patterson Road.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: And then maybe Bruns's. That was a part of Stacks...steggars?

CW: Sacksteder's.

RW: Yeah, which was right next door to the Sohio station, where he got gas [*laughs*].

CW: I hadn't thought about that in a long time. Bruns, I remember that.

RW: My great uncle's step daughter's neighbor owned Bruns. He lived in Centerville. So we'd just go through the back door and my dad would take me along with him, you know. They'd let us in before they were opened or closed or whatever. Yeah, my dad took me to a lot of pretty good places [*laughs*].

CW: That's cool.

RW: Entertainment – I was it.

CW: What kind of songs were you playing?

RW: Oh, anything that I just heard. It was wild, I could hear –

CW: So you were real good at mimicking –

RW: Yeah. That last song that I heard on the radio – I could play. If I heard it once, I'm playing it.

CW: It's funny how some people just have that ear and other people really have to study and kind of learn things note by note.

RW: Yeah, it works for me, I can hit it right off. For Christmas gifts, you know, I always said, "I'd like to have an instrument I've never played". So, you know, my dad would bring me home a couple boxes and say "Play these!" you know.

CW: Right.

RW: He didn't know what else I could ever play - I played everything.

CW: So what did you play first? The guitar or the accordion?

RW: Yeah, the guitar. The guitar was my first instrument.

CW: That was before your accordion?

RW: Then the accordion. I actually took lessons on the accordion, too.

CW: By choice?

RW: Yeah, yeah. Dad wanted me to learn more about music, and he felt that instead of buying me a great big piano, the accordion would be easier – something smaller, you know?

CW: Right.

RW: But I was so skinny, you know? When I graduated from high school I don't think I weighed eighty pounds. So when growing up I was a lot smaller than that, and the accordion probably outweighed me.

CW: Yeah.

RW: But I learned the chords and I learned the notes really very well with that. Ross – Ross... What was his name...? He played in *Midwestern Hayride*.

CW: Yeah, you mentioned that before.

RW: He was my teacher. He actually lived here.

CW: He was someone who gave you lessons?

RW: Yeah, on the accordion. Then I got to play music on Midwestern Hayride, with the accordion.

CW: How old were you?

RW: Oh, maybe nine – ten.

CW: So still really young.

RW: Really young. That's when I met Willie Nelson [*laughs*].

CW: And tell us a little bit about Midwestern Hayride. Was that a national or regional – was it a TV show?

RW: It was in Cincinnati.

CW: Cincinnati?

RW: Yeah, the station we went to was in Cincinnati.

CW: It was on TV?

RW: It was on TV, yeah. That blowed my mind, I couldn't figure that one out, you know?

CW: Nine years old...

RW: Yeah, and I'm headed good, you know? I got to meet Willie Nelson, which back then he was just an old guy who dressed up all the time in a suit and tie – in a white shirt. Not the Willie you see today.

CW: Right, right.

RW: And I can tell you another story about that.

CW: Yeah. So, he was a stock player?

RW: Yeah, he was always on there or substituted for somebody who didn't show up. He was there.

CW: How'd you get invited there?

RW: Through –

CW: Through your teacher?

RW: Through my teacher, yeah. He thought I was amazing being able to play. At graduation they threw music on me, you know – polkas *[laughs]*. I was able to play these polkas on a huge accordion, which usually the teenagers got – I was younger, like five or six years before I was a teenager.

CW: Polka music around Ohio – that's pretty serious *[laughs]*.

RW: *[Laughing]* Yeah, not too many people want to hear that, you know? It didn't pay nothin' *[laughs]*.

CW: *[Laughing]* right.

RW: But I could play it.

CW: If you're up in the Hungarian community up in Cleveland.

RW: Maybe somebody's wedding or something, I don't know. And from there I just wanted to learn the keyboard. I always wanted to play the harpsichord, I always thought that was pretty neat.

CW: The harpsichord, yeah.

RW: Because I like the sound – yeah. There was only a couple that I really liked and one of them was in Preble County, and the tubes to it was in the basement – this deep cellar. I went down there – this is when I was a kid, my grandparents knew these people out of Preble County –

CW: It was at their house?

RW: Yeah and this outfit was as big as that cabinet. Ans this guy, you would sit and hear him play and could actually hear the chimes and the music coming from the bottom of this basement going up. It was wild sounding. I said, "Man, I want this so bad", you know? But that house – I believe it's probably still in that old house.

CW: It comes with the house.

RW: Yeah, that thing – somebody would've had to be rich to have that thing.

CW: I didn't even know they made them that big.

RW: Oh man, I've never seen anything that big in my life – to this day. It was out there by 503. There was a big ole mansion out there and this piano was right in the center of this house. Like they had to build the house around it. It was bad...

CW: So, you learned to play that? And you learned to play piano?

RW: Yeah.

CW: But you didn't have a piano, though?

RW: No, no, no. Our house was so small, if you opened the front door you're in the back yard [*laughs*].

CW: [*Laughing*] right, right.

RW: So, my dad said, "If we're going to have a dog it's going to be a real small one."
[*Laughs*].

CW: Right, right.

RW: I ended up playing music in just about every band –

CW: How did you go from that – when did you first start playing, I mean other than the TV show – when did you first start hooking up with friends and form more of your first band or group of friends instead of just playing solo?

RW: Well, growing up, my one buddy, we played guitars together a lot as kids. Instead of riding bicycles or whatever, we was playing guitar. Dennis Freeland, Marty Shively, Ron Riddle –

CW: He played for what? Blue Oyster Cult?

RW: Blue Oyster Cult, he was the drummer for Blue Oyster Cult.

CW: Now John – what was his first name? You said John Freeland?

RW: Dennis Freeland.

CW: Dennis Freeland.

RW: Yeah, he actually started playing – he set in with Heart way back. Then Marty Shively – McGuffey Lane.

CW: That was a big name back in the day.

RW: Yeah. Now, me and Paul Beach – God, I could just go on and on with these names... but these guys are who we played with as a neighborhood. We all played. Cars, you know, and we ended up playing guitars and playing music but we would chum around together. We went to Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts – we were in the streets.

CW: So, these were just all the kids in your neighborhood.

RW: Yeah, this is what we did.

CW: Man, that's a concentration of just fantastic –

RW: Oh, to this day. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to play back music with Marty Shively, and we both said “This time we’re going to play it right”, you know [*laughs*]. “We’re going to hit the right notes”, and we did, and it sounded great. I had Dennis Freeland – he came into town and I tried to get a hold of Ron and I said, “You know, we need to get all this music together because some of this stuff is what Capital Records would not buy from them guys, and so they own it. They own their own music and they still have it. And we was playing that and I was trying to get a hold of a few

guys – “Let’s get together and make this music the right way.” Got everybody, pretty much, back together except for Ron – I couldn’t get a hold of Ron. He’s playing with a band called *Riddle Me This* in upper New York. But this year, I think he’s coming back for the class reunion. So, we might be able – [*laughing*] I told him I’d come up and get him.

CW: Yeah.

RW: And he says, “We’ll never make it to the class reunion, will we?” and I said “Probably not, but we’ll have a blast trying to make it there, you know?”

CW: [*Laughing*] right.

RW: We’ll stop at every bar –

CW: How cool would that be, for you guys to like play –

RW: Oh, to me it would be great.

CW: Are all you guys still playing a little?

RW: Yeah, yeah. Like I said, I played a few years back with Marty Shively, and he had hit the lottery once or twice – the Ohio lottery.

CW: The real lottery? Wow.

RW: Yeah –

CW: Once or twice?

RW: Yeah, a couple times, he did. So, he’s pretty well set –

CW: Yeah.

RW: He and Dennis both said, “If we can get everybody back together, we would all do it again, one more time.” Unfortunately, last year, Ray Reed – he passed away of cancer. He was the bass player we had in grade school. He was actually in Ron Riddle’s first band.

CW: Do you remember what that was called?

RW: I can’t think of it. Not right now, I never wrote it down. They made a record in grade school.

CW: Really?

RW: Yeah. We was good, we weren’t just your average type of... Our music teacher would sit down and pretty much let us take over in grade school because we could play.

CW: Yeah. I remember from when we talked as a group that they were saying like all the bands kind of around that time were all teenagers.

RW: Yeah.

CW: And all these garage bands... But it’s like if you were nineteen it’s like, “You’re old”.

RW: *[Laughs]*

CW: “Mister, you’re a little old to be in a band.” *[Laughs]*

RW: There was this lady I worked with – I work part-time at Ace Hardware. She'll sing [laughs]... God love her, she tries. I think she's doing it just to hear me sort of correct her, because when I start singing, she'll stop. I think she just does it to hear me actually sing.

CW: So, you didn't just play, you sung, too.

RW: Oh, yeah.

CW: Pretty good singer?

RW: They say I'm pretty good.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: I'll tell you a couple songs here. Whenever you're ready.

CW: Okay [Laughs]! When did you meet Ira? Remember Ira Stanley?

RW: Yeah.

CW: You guys played together, didn't you?

RW: Yeah, but I don't think he really remembers much of me.

CW: He was remembering things when we were talking about a band you guys were in together.

RW: He lived – his parents lived – close to my cousin. My cousin would say, "Rick, come over and bring guitar." Well, I would ride my bicycle from Belmont down close to East Town. That's where they lived, in that area. They said, "This band's playing, and

you've got to hear this guy play guitar", "Alright." So, I ride over there and it was Ira and a few guys, it was a few years back - trust me, we all looked different back then. I was super skinny and I told Ira, I said "I came over on a blue Stingray carrying my guitar on my back", and I said, "You're not going to like me to well", and he goes "Why?", and I said, "I think I could out play you, ha!" [*Laughs*].

CW: I'm sure he loved that [*laughs*].

RW: [*Laughing*] yeah. Dennis Freeland, Dennis is an amazing guitar player and whenever I would go out a lot of times Dennis would ride his bicycle with me. We'd both be ready to jam, you know?

CW: Yeah.

RW: And that was actually the first time I met Ira. Man, I must've been nine or ten years old. Right around that – eleven, maybe.

CW: And you rode down on your bike –

RW: Yeah, and met Ira.

CW: Is he a little older than you?

RW: No, we're about the same age, I think – within a year or two. I'm sixty-eight right now...

CW: Sixty-eight? Yeah, I told you about that show when we saw Toni Vest.

RW: Yeah.

CW: She was playing Ira's Blues – what was it... The Ira Stanley Blues Explosion, or something like that. That's how they got Scotty Bratcher– Ira knows Scotty. Apparently, Ira knows, like, everybody.

RW: Everybody, yeah. If you're in the Belmont area, you knew who the best was and you knew what bands play, you know? And that's what you kept trying to get to – to be better and better until I can play with that band.

CW: Right, right. So, a lot of people sitting in with each other?

RW: Yeah.

CW: There's a lot of stories of people just –

RW: Exactly, everybody would sit in –

CW: Just showing up at a bar and seeing if you could get on stage a little bit.

RW: Pretty much it, yeah. That was exactly it.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Tried to find somebody who had a new garage because that way, you can leave your instruments with them without them getting stolen away [*laughs*].

CW: Then they'd have to invite you back [*laughs*].

RW: Yeah [*laughing*]. Because their dads would park their cars in there and lock it up, you see.

CW: Right, right [*laughing*].

RW: So, you'd have to come back [*laughs*]. Can't play real late.

CW: Who was the guy that owned The Forum?

RW: Oh, that was Lenny Davis.

CW: Yeah.

RW: He's an amazing man.

CW: That sounded like that was a neat club.

RW: Yeah. He had entertainment all the time and I had the pizza parlor next door to him. I had The Village Inn – I owned the one on Smithville, and then I was district supervisor for seven of them, and I ran the one on Siebenthaler. And Lenny would come by and pound at the back door.

CW: That's where The Forum was?

RW: Yeah, Siebenthaler. And he would knock on my back door and say, "Hey, I need a couple sandwiches" blah blah blah. "Yeah, I'll fix you right up" and I'd take him over some sandwiches or whatever they needed, and later on that evening he'd let me sit on stage with him and play a little bit of music with him. That was always fun – relaxing. The people there who worked for me- cause' I took them with me- it made them feel more relaxed about their boss. "The boss gets down, man" you know?

CW: Right [*Laughs*]. "He's pretty cool", right.

RW: [*Laughs*] "He knows Lenny and he knows the Davis Division".

CW: And then you get up on stage.

RW: Yeah, yeah.

CW: So, what were you singing?

RW: Oh, whatever these guys were playing. I was always looking for Sonny Flaherty to pop in, because that was a real close friend of Lenny's.

CW: Because that was more of like a club.

RW: It was, it was a club.

CW: Like a dinner club.

RW: Yeah, sure was.

CW: Did they do different kinds of music at the dinner club?

RW: Yes, they did. They did jazz, blues, and he'd put on skits. That was really... And he had the music, they did their own music –

CW: All about entertainment.

RW: The entertainment – and he could put on some shows. I mean you wouldn't want to take your eyes off of him, because those guys were good.

CW: I remember him saying, "I can do anything but I can't tell a joke" [*laughs*]. He said, "I try" [*laughs*].

RW: [*Laughing*] I remember I said, "Lenny, I want you to come over" – I always invited him to come over to my house. I said, "Come over and I'll make you a pizza" and he

goes “No” [*laughs*] “because you’re going to want me to play the keyboard.” I said, “Yeah, you play keyboard, I’ll play the guitar – might as well jam a little bit.” He goes, “Well, I don’t know how” [*laughs*].

CW: “I don’t know how.”

RW: [*Laughing*] “I don’t know how to play the keyboard.” “Okay Lenny”, you know? “I’ll feed you. Just come over and see me.”

CW: Yeah, he was a very produced –

RW: Yeah, yeah. He’s a super guy.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Nothing bad to say about anybody. Those guys, because of the people I knew, is what made me, and how I wanted to play and perform. Because I look at them and I wanted to be like them, or if I could – better.

CW: Right.

RW: But it was hard, because those guys were always the best. They were already out there doing it, and that’s what I wanted to do. I ended up doing pretty good, but...

CW: Well, it seems like it was not... I know you said that you always wanted to be the best, but it seems like a lot of these musicians all kind of took care of each other.

RW: We did.

CW: It wasn’t a real competitive thing.

RW: Still to this day, they still do.

CW: Right.

RW: You know, if you go into a night club where they're playing, and they know you – even if they don't know you – you're always welcome. You know? They make you feel welcome.

CW: Right.

RW: And the music that they play, they will put you right into the era that you needed to be.

CW: Right.

RW: I went to a place called Duffer's, or... Hank's it's called now. This was before Christmas –

CW: Yeah, that a popular place. There's a lot of music there.

RW: Yeah. *The Brown Street* goes there-

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: There's a lot of popular bands that go there. Well, [*laughs*] I seen this one guy, and he's dynamite at guitar, and then I hear this name and you know, I haven't seen some of these guys in fifty some years. I told my wife, I said, "If I hear that name one more time I'm going to see if it's that guy playing the guitar" and she goes. "Oh, you probably know him" [*Laughs*] you know, because it's an old guy, had long hair and a beard.

CW: Yeah you probably got –

RW: [*Laughing*] we probably got kin, you know?

CW: [*Laughing*] right. He probably lives next door to you.

RW: Yeah. So, I finally get up and walk over to him and I say, "I got to ask you something, man" I said, "Did you ever live in Belmont?" He goes, "Yeah, I did" and I say, "Did you ever hang out around Belmont Elementary around the monkey bars and stuff and bring your guitar?"

CW: [*Laughs*]

RW: He goes, "Yeah, I did!" and I said, "I'll be damned, I think I played music with you." [*Laughs*] and I told him who I was and he goes, "Ricky T!" And I go, "Yeah, that's me" I hadn't been called that in a while but that was me.

CW: Where's Ricky T come from?

RW: Thomas. There were so many Ricks [*laughs*] that we went with the middle initial.

CW: Right, right.

RW: Rick T sort of stuck like a model T Ford, you know?

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: "Rick T!" You know? It was Thomas.

CW: That's cool.

RW: So, the name stuck and I went from there. But yeah, the guy – he could play, and I was so amazed. The whole band that he played with, each one of them could sing and play their own gig.

CW: Right, right. You know, when Ira's band was playing, people kept pointing out different people who were on stage and saying, 'Oh, hear his other band', 'He was a session player for this and this'. And it was funny, when I went to the show and I got there early and it's like – everyone's like seventy years old.

RW: *[Laughs]*

CW: And I'm like, 'I am the youngest person in here by like twenty years'.

RW: Yeah.

CW: Then the music starts and everyone just starts looking at me like, "Uh-huh, now you get it" *[laughs]*.

RW: *[Laughing]* yeah.

CW: But everyone was great, it was totally a community. And they all went to see each other play. But yeah, they were so cool to me, and Terry Walters was there – I met a bunch of people.

RW: Yeah.

CW: It's just neat to see how everyone's stuck together or hasn't seen each other in decades and it's... don't miss a beat.

RW: A few years back my daughter's house caught fire in Preble County and it burnt and it destroyed everything she had. With it I had this chest that must've been a couple

hundred years old. In that chest, I had all my pictures with the band – everything from all the bands I played with. They all got kind of destroyed. And lo and behold, out of the blue, the very next day, my daughter calls me. She goes “Dad, when are you coming out here?” I go, “Well I was trying to make it out there today”, that day, she says “Well, there’s a guy here who says he knows you. His name’s Steve.” I said, “Well, I know a lot of Steve’s.” She goes, “Well there’s one thing better, he’s refurnishing everything I got.” I said, “Huh?” she goes, “He says he knows you from school and you and he played music, and he’s helping us out quite a bit.” I said, “I got to meet this guy.” So anyway, I get out there, and it was Steve... Steve –

CW: Carrasas?

RW: Yeah, Carrasas. He happened to live not far from where I’m at now. And he flies one of them airplanes [*laughs*].

CW: Yeah [*laughs*].

RW: Does all that.

CW: He doesn’t play too much anymore, he’s really into flying now.

RW: Yeah, he’s into some neat stuff. But he helped out my daughter, and I hadn’t seen him in forty some years.

CW: Yeah, he was like a carpenter –

RW: Yeah.

CW: So, that’s really cool.

RW: It is. It’s really neat how everybody’s still coming together to help each other.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: Because you have your family – your aunts and uncles. But when you got the music, and the people, I'll tell you what – you got the world.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: I don't care how down and out you are, somebody will come over and pick and [grin] a little bit and make you smile.

CW: Yeah.

RW: That's what the world about – smiling. Love.

CW: Yeah.

RW: And it's all in the music.

CW: Right, right.

RW: Music will make you or break you.

CW: You grew up, in terms of music – you grew up at the right time.

RW: Oh, The Temptations, the –

CW: Everything.

RW: Yeah. Motown, you know? Rock and roll, jazz, gospel – gospel is rock and roll!

CW: Right, right. From the early sixties, through that decade, the music that came out – and all the genres that were influencing each other... What was it like? When the Beatles hit, you were what – like ten? Twelve?

RW: Yeah, I was young when The Beatles hit. Yeah, because I was still into like Elvis Presley and stuff at that time, you know? Music took a big change. There was this band called *The Travelers Four New Blues Messenger*–

CW: The Travelers...?

RW: Four.

CW: The Travelers Four.

RW: Yeah, and they lived right around the corner [*laughs*] – everybody lived right around the corner.

CW: New Blues Messenger?

RW: Yeah.

CW: You guys had the names.

RW: Yeah.

CW: You had some good names.

RW: Oh yeah. Well it happened to be – the one gentleman who has a place in Florida, does all the music... I can't think of his name – but I took his spot [*laughs*].

CW: Really?

RW: As the singer, yeah – with them. Dale Whitt was the drummer, and they lived in the mansion on Croydon Avenue. But he would start playing and I could hear it, you know, at my house. So, I'd just go on over and start –

CW: Where was this?

RW: Croydon, it was a big –

CW: Croydon?

RW: Croydon, yeah. They had the biggest house in that area.

CW: And the music was just flowing out of there?

RW: And Sonny even went over there, Sonny Flaherty. I think that's the first time I met Sonny – was there, or at the GBU Hall. If you got really good, you got to play the GBU Hall on Linden Avenue.

CW: Right, right. I've heard that. That was making it.

RW: That was the place to be. It might have cost you seventy-five cents to get in or something like that, but you'd be there all day. There would be four, five, maybe six bands playing.

CW: Yeah.

RW: It was neat.

CW: That's where they did like the battle of the bands and stuff?

RW: Yeah. Everything was happening there.

CW: Did you ever do any of that?

RW: Yes, I did. With the Travelers Four.

CW: The Travelers Four?

RW: Yeah, and I think there was [*laughs*] five or six of us in that band.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: But it was good. I mean times were so much... easier.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Music – it just flew.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Yeah... But I don't know, it was just great times.

CW: So, what were the bands that you would say influenced you?

RW: Dave Clark Five, Three Dog Night – I always thought those guys were pretty good.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Any band that Sonny was in was good [*laughs*]. You know, we'd hear it and then we'd try to play it, of course. And being a friend, we got to hear the music first time out. Dale Whitt – we called him Harry. He had real long hair and he had a beard – or a goatee. Last I heard he was going to audition for Black Sabbath. Now that must've been what?

1960's? Around sixty something, sixty-eight or sixty-nine. And I never knew what happened to him from then on, but he was a real good friend. His grandmother owned the house on Croydon, that big mansion, and it's still there.

CW: Still there?

RW: Yeah. They had a place for a horse and carriage, underneath the house.

CW: Really?

RW: Yeah. That's where we'd play. We played where the horse and carriage would be. The house was super. I mean it was old and... But the acoustics in that place was great.

CW: So that's what you did – you made friends with the people who had the big garages.

RW: Yeah, right. We knew we could play in them, you know.

CW: Right *[laughs]*. Invite yourself over, you don't really like the guy...

RW: *[Laughs]*. "What did grandma make to eat tonight?" *[Laughs]*.

CW: Right *[laughs]*. So, you're playing with your friends like through high school and stuff?

RW: Yeah.

CW: You still played after high school?

RW: Yeah, yeah. I moved out to Preble county and stayed there for about twenty years. I played with some bands – all types of music. Loose Change Band – we were making up our own music.

CW: Lose Change Band?

RW: Yeah that's what we was called, Loose Change. We always felt that way if anybody had any loose change they'd come see us.

CW: Right.

RW: Sometimes they'd toss you a dollar bill.

CW: Just playing rock and stuff?

RW: Yeah, yeah. And we made up our own songs.

CW: That's cool.

RW: We did that for a couple years, and I own all the music. I kept it.

CW: Did you have another job? Were you supporting yourself through music?

RW: I supported – through music, yeah.

CW: You did?

RW: Yeah, it's what kept us going. I was a tool maker for a while at Apex Machine Tool and Die, but it didn't pay me as well as I could make – cash – playing music.

CW: I think it used to be easier –

RW: It was.

CW: To support yourself.

RW: It was. Yeah, it sure was. I wouldn't want to try it today.

CW: Yeah, some people were saying that they got paid for gigs then the same amount they're getting paid now.

RW: Yeah [*chuckles*].

CW: You know and this is like in the late sixties. And you could get like regular – I know at the Forum, it was like a five day a week job, basically.

RW: Yeah, it was. Yeah, those guys were there all the time.

CW: So, in your twenties, you're playing in bands?

RW: Yes, yes. Twenties clear up till' now – well now I'm just freeloading [*laughs*]. If someone's playing music and I like it –

CW: So, it's gone full circle [*Laughing*]. Now you're just dropping in –

RW: I just drop in, if they see me in the crowd they'll go, "Hey". Fries band, I enjoy going to see the Fries. They're a pretty good bunch. I've known them for about forty years.

CW: The Fries?

RW: Yeah, they're an east end type band – rock and roll. If you ever get a chance to see the band – they play a lot of sixties, seventies, some eighties.

CW: What are some other bands around now that you like?

RW: I like all the blues – I love hearing blues. I don't know... I like them all. I like all types of music!

CW: Right, right. But you still go out and see music a lot?

RW: Yeah.

CW: Where do you like to go?

RW: I go up to –

CW: To Hanks?

RW: Hank's, yeah.

CW: A lot of folks go up there.

RW: It's convenient.

CW: Yeah.

RW: I don't drink anymore so...

CW: Yeah, I've been going to the Phone Booth quite a bit.

RW: Yeah [*nods head*]. Dennis goes in there quite a bit. My buddie, Dennis.

CW: Yeah. There are a lot of good bands in there.

RW: Yeah there is.

CW: My brother in law plays in the Elderly Brothers. I don't know if you've heard of them?

RW: Yeah, yeah.

CW: They've been together awhile, and they play there. I live – I don't live very far from there, so it's convenient. I don't like driving too far, you know?

RW: Same here.

CW: What was the other band? The Living End? Do you remember that band?

RW: Yes, I do.

CW: Is that one of your early bands?

RW: Yes. Living End. That's the band Ron was in.

CW: That was a pretty popular band.

RW: Yeah, those guys made a record in eighth grade – high school, they made a record. Yeah. Those guys were really good.

CW: So, you went in the studio with them to make a record?

RW: No, I didn't go in with them, no.

CW: You played with the band at one time and not –

RW: Yeah, I'd sit in back in school times.

CW: You ever make any studio recordings?

RW: Yes, I have. Well, all the ones we did with the Loose Change Band – all that was studio. We never did sell. Nothing sold.

CW: But you were doing originals?

RW: Yeah, all originals. It's hard to get stuff lifted unless you get some time out. To play it.

CW: Right.

RW: And you get an audience... That takes some time.

CW: Right, right.

RW: And a new sound – sometimes it don't go over.

CW: Right.

RW: We had like twelve – twenty some new songs. My problem, our problem, was we should've played older songs that the crowd knew and then brought in our new with it.

CW: Right.

RW: Instead, we went out and tried to promote all the new songs and people just wasn't ready for that.

CW: People want to hear what they know.

RW: Yeah. Everybody's a critic and everybody knows the songs [*laughs*]. You know, you might have been the one that wrote it and know which way it's got to go, but you might be playing it wrong [*laughs*]. Cause' the guy it the audience knows [*laughs*].

CW: Right, right.

RW: Anyways... My wife asks me this the other day. She goes, "Would you do it all over again?" And yeah, I would. Yeah, there would be a few things I'd change.

CW: What would you do different.

RW: I'd hold on to a lot more of my money than I did [*laughing*].

CW: Easier said than done [*laughs*].

RW: Yeah, maybe would've invested my money in different ways than what I did. But all the people I met, you know? Everything has been great. My life has been good, I have two great kids, I've got good grandkids. Yeah, they're the best. And the people I got to meet. I got to meet you, through all of this I got to meet people, and that's been fun.

CW: You all have that common thread, you know?

RW: Yeah.

CW: Between you.

RW: That helps, yeah.

CW: So, when did you start doing some of this Ozzy stuff? I know some people have made careers out of impersonating and that kind of thing.

RW: See, I was asked that. “Do you impersonate Ozzy?” “Uh... [*impersonating Ozzy*] I don’t know, man. I have to. This is just the way it is, man” [*laughs*].

CW: Right, right [*laughing*].

RW: I woke up to my wife wanting to change the color of my hair. I said “Hey, go for it”, you know, I didn’t care.

CW: How long ago was this?

RW: [*Laughs*]. Oh, twenty years or so.

CW: Twenty years?

RW: Twenty some years ago, yeah. She dyed it black. I had a real long beard and I shaved it all off, cleaned up, and I came down and it just happened to be that Ozzy’s show was on TV. The house thing that they had, you know?

CW: Oh, where they were showing them in the mansion.

RW: Yeah, and I came down the stairs and my hair was all piled up, and I come down the steps and my wife looked over at me, and she looked at the TV – my grandson said, “Paps, that’s Ozzy.” And I look over and his hair was just like mine. “Oh man, what happened here” [*laughing*]. I went to bed as me, and woke up looking at me on TV. From then on, where ever we’d go, everybody was mistaking me as Ozzy.

CW: So, there was that close of a resemblance that people actually thought –

RW: Oh, yeah! That’s the reason I did –

CW: People were like “Is that Ozzy?”

RW: When you're at a restaurant eating food, and at the restaurant overwhelmingly... people are coming and sitting at your table thinking you're going to buy them dinner [laughs]. I had to do something to change that look again, you?

CW: Right, right.

RW: It got to be ridiculous. I mean everywhere we'd go. So, my wife goes, "We're going to go see Ozzy", "Alright, Let's go." So, I bought the tickets, and he didn't show up. So, I'm standing there going through this line and they're searching you down. So, this guy comes up to me and starts searching me. So, I go, "Uh... [impersonating Ozzy] I'll give you five dollars to do that again, man" [laughs]. Next thing I know I got security being called, and Shauna goes, "Well, you've really done it this time. Now we're going to get kicked out, and we're not even going to see Ozzy." [laughing]

CW: So, everyone – security – everyone thought you were Ozzy?

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RW: Oh yeah, everyone thought I was Ozzy. So, they take me back behind this place in this mobile home deal, and this guy by the name of Larry, he comes out with all this curly hair with all different colors. He looked at me and he kept staring. He goes, "What's your name?" I said, "Well, today I'm Ozzy". He goes, "No" [laughs], "We know better" [laughs]. He goes, "Well, what is your name?", and I go "Rick Webster. What did I do wrong?" He goes, "Not a thing", he goes, "How many Ozzy songs do you know?" I said, "I know them all". He goes, "For real?", I go "Yeah. Right now, I can do whatever you want to hear". From me yelling out "Sharon!" all the way – you know?

CW: Yeah, Black Sabbath on up through –

RW: All the way. I can do it all. He goes, "How well?", I said "Well enough". He says, "Well, we're going to walk with you through the area".

CW: Had you like actually performed Ozzy songs before?

RW: Yeah... A couple times in bars and stuff, you know? With other bands.

CW: That was probably a bigger venue.

RW: Oh, [*Laughs*] I mean when you got fifty thousand people looking at your ass – you better not do nothing wrong.

CW: Right.

RW: So, we're walking around and these people are coming at me and up to my wife, and security is, you know, backing everybody off. I said, "You know, [*nods head*]" – I made the detour. I seen where it says stage, so I went back to the stage and I was walking up the stage and John's saying, "Rick", and I said, "They got security here" [*laughs*]. "What are they going to do to me?" [*laughing*].

CW: Is that what they were trying to get you to do?

RW: They wanted to see how the audience would react to me.

CW: They first wanted to see if they would believe it?

RW: Yeah. So, they hollered over the intercom, they said "Ozzy won't be performing today. Due to an accident he will not be here. If you want your money refunded – but the act is still going to go on." So, I was the act. My wife's going, "I can't believe I'm getting to see Rob Zombie!" [*laughs*]. I said, "Rob Zombie?" [*doing Ozzy impression*] "You're married to Ozzy and you want to see Rob Zombie?" [*laughs*]. Everybody started breaking up, and now we're on stage. I mean this stage was the biggest stage I had ever been on. I'm looking at people, and people are looking two inches tall. This is the biggest performance I've ever had to do.

CW: Just a sea of people.

RW: Just a sea of people. People ask me, “Did you imitate him?”, I said, “No. No, I actually sang. My voice is what you heard – me. Not Ozzy, that was me, and I didn’t imitate him’. So, I don’t try to imitate, I will do the best I can being whoever that’s supposed to be.

CW: Right.

RW: I don’t try to imitate. There’s no way I could possibly do that.

CW: Right, right.

RW: But I had fun. That night – here’s what really got me – we pulled up to this hotel, everything was packed. So, the guy happened to have his back to me and he goes, “Sir” – now he’s talking not at me, but his back is facing me – and he goes, “Sir, no vacancy. We’re booked.” I say, [*imitating Ozzy*] “Well, before you do that, you better turn your ass around and see who I am”. He turns around, and just goes, “Third Floor” [*laughs*], and hands me the keys to the biggest room I’ve ever had, and he goes, “Sir? Also, sir, no smoking.” So, we get up to the third floor, and you could just smell the pot.

CW: “No smoking” [*laughs*].

RW: “No smoking”. Everybody was smoking that day, I swear [*Laughs*]. Yeah, it sure was good [*laughing*].

CW: You can smoke pot, you just can’t smoke cigarettes [*laughing*].

RW: There you go [*laughing*]. So, my wife wakes up at two or three in the morning and she goes, “I want some shrimp, I’m hungry for shrimp”, and I said “Well, call them”. So,

they did, room service had it. Whatever we wanted. It was great – all expenses paid. So, that next day, part of my payment was paying for that room and all that. It was like five, six, seven hundred bucks for one night. It was great.

CW: This was Columbus you said?

RW: Columbus, yeah. Right across from the stadium where we played. I mean you could walk right across the street to the hotel.

CW: Really?

RW: Yeah, it was nice. Had a chandelier above my bed *[laughs]* it was nice. I wanted to jump up there and swing on it but I didn't *[laughing]*.

CW: So, it was of those real nice downtown hotels there?

RW: Oh yeah, it was real nice.

CW: So, this was like a double bill Rob Zombie and Ozzy?

RW: Yeah, Ozzy. Its still on the internet *[laughs]*.

CW: Is it really?

RW: Still on there, yeah.

CW: Well, that's cool. When I first heard the story, I didn't realize they were like "Ozzy isn't here but the show will go on." I thought it was kind of just like, "Alright, lets see if we can pull this off."

RW: Yeah, *[laughs]*.

CW: So, is that your favorite memory?

RW: Yeah, that was a great time.

CW: That was the night –

RW: Still haven't met Ozzy, still never have. One day he's going to get a load of me [laughs]. I'm going to charge him to come and see me [laughs].

CW: You're probably quite a bit taller than him.

RW: Yeah, a few inches. I'm 6'2 he's like 5'8 or 5'9 or something like that.

CW: Yeah. Well, I liked the way that you worked on your Ozzy speak.

RW: [Laughs]. That was so fun, I'll tell you. If you don't enjoy life today, well, you won't enjoy life tomorrow, because tomorrow might be too late. So, you better have a blast as you're doing it.

CW: Do you have any other brushes with fame? I know you said Willie Nelson?

RW: Yeah, I got to play music for Muhammad Ali's baseball league. He had a Little League team.

CW: Really?

RW: Got to play music for him in Indiana. What was really neat was that on our way back, we stayed in the same motel that he was at. And we never got to see him at the baseball – never got to see him. So, when I got ready to load the car up, I was going out

the door and he was coming in, and *[laughs]* he put his arms up like this, “Oh my God!” You know? His hand is as big as my head! “This guy is going to clobber me.”

CW: Yeah, “Don’t hit me, Champ.”

RW: I looked up and I said, “The Champ!”

CW: Yeah.

RW: He just shook his head because he had like Alzheimer’s and he couldn’t talk real good. I said, “You got to come up to my room. My wife is not going to believe this.” I said, “Because you’re one of the people in her life that she’s always wanted to meet.” And he was going to go up to my room with me, and his wife stopped us. Says, “No, no, no, no. Can’t go up there.” *[laughs]*.

CW: Right.

RW: So, I went up and told my wife – I said, “I got somebody famous downstairs who wants to meet you.” Well, by the time we got downstairs, the crowd was already around him.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: And he looked over at me and I said, “See you later, Champ.”

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: He shoved those people away to hug my wife.

CW: Really?

RW: You'd had to see her face.

CW: Right.

RW: Like, you know – this man did this for her, because I asked him to say hi to my wife. He –

CW: And he did it.

RW: Oh man.

CW: Yeah, I always heard he was a real sweet guy.

RW: He was a super guy. Gentle – I don't know how he got so mean in the ring. But a gentle, nice man. You know, he had a lot of heart.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: I'm glad I got to be able to call him my friend – and somebody I met. I got play music for his Little League, so I know he had to of heard me.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: In my life, I've met a lot of entertainers – big time people. And they've all been super.

CW: You stayed friends with Willie Nelson, didn't you?

RW: Oh yeah! There was a shooting that happened about nineteen years ago now, out in Preble county.

CW: Preble County. So that's always been a big –

RW: Yeah.

CW: You spent a lot of time in Preble County?

RW: Yeah, and my kids – and these younger kids – they had an old farm house together. And even the dads and moms would go out there and have big bonfires and play music around the bonfire. Whatever you missed doing growing up, we're still doing with our kids to this day.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Yeah. Showing them fun is still here. You don't have to be rich and famous to have the fun we're getting ready to have.

CW: Right.

RW: Anyway, there was a murder that happened out there, and my kids witnessed it. It was there good friend.

CW: Really? How old were they?

RW: Maybe nineteen, twenty years old.

CW: Really?

RW: Yeah. And they killed Clayton Helriggle – that was his name. He was walking down the steps carrying a glass, they said it was a gun – it wasn't. And the police department tried to cover it up.

CW: Really?

RW: Bad, bad.

CW: So, the police had come to the house?

RW: Yeah, they came to raid the place – said they was selling drugs.

CW: I'm remembering this a little now. So that was in the news?

RW: Oh, yeah.

CW: So, he was friend of yours?

RW: Yeah, very good friend – family's good friend. We put a jam together, "A Jam for Justice" is what we called it. We had some of the top bands from Ohio play. I called Willie Nelson to see if I could get him to come play. He was going to – trying to, but it happened to be the same time the tax people wanted to talk to him, too *[laughs]*. So, he was having trouble getting transportation –

CW: Crossing state lines –

RW: Yeah, he was having some problems.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: But yeah, I felt like he could come – a few other people I invited. But we jammed pretty hard, and they shut down interstate 35 for us. From 503 to Eaton – there's seven and a half miles they had to shut down because I had – the other bands had blocked for the music.

CW: Really?

RW: Yeah. So, it was a pretty good time, really. And people showed that they still believe in justice.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: And that the murder that happened, actually happened.

CW: Yeah, yeah. That's very sad.

RW: It was sad.

CW: But that's cool that – sounds like he would've been on his way if he could've –

RW: Yeah, I believe he still would do it.

CW: And he remembered who you were.

RW: Oh yeah. He remembers me as a kid.

CW: Well, you were the kid with the accordion [*laughs*].

RW: [*Laughs*], with the accordion, yeah!

CW: Of course he remembered you.

RW: The accordion was as big as me [*laughing*]!

CW: Yeah.

RW: Damn near as tall [*laughs*].

CW: Right.

RW: But yeah, I've kept in touch with him. I talk to him every once in a while. I used to keep in contact with John Cougar.

CW: Oh really?

RW: I haven't talked to him in maybe... Sixteen, seventeen years. But yeah, we'd play music at the motorcycle functions.

CW: Right.

RW: This is before he became who he was.

CW: Right, right.

RW: Yeah, we've had some fun. Again, I loved every minute of it.

CW: Right. Well, that's fantastic. So, is there anything else that you wanted to talk to us about? Any other memories that over the last few weeks as we were putting this together – has anything occurred to you?

RW: That pretty much sums it up. Maybe one day I'll still get the band back together that we had back in grade school and high school.

CW: That would be really cool.

RW: Yeah.

CW: I think you would have many people who would show up for that.

RW: The people from our high school – grade school- said that they'd be there for us, for support.

CW: Even if you could get a couple of those guys together, you know? When everyone's there for the reunion –

RW: I'm looking forward to the reunion coming up here in August, there on the VFW on Wilmington Pike. That's where we're having it.

CW: Yeah, yeah,

RW: I'm pretty sure Ira will be there –

CW: Was he in your grade?

RW: Yeah... Close. We're from Belmont so they mixed all the classes together –

CW: I met Ira and I met Steve –

RW: Steve? Yeah. See, they had all played there before, a few years back. Yeah, but like I told Ron, "I'll come and get you" [*laughs*], you know?

CW: Right.

RW: We will sooner or later make it there.

CW: Yeah.

RW: Yeah, I'd like to get that together. Dennis I'm sure will play, and Marty [*Shively*].

CW: Yeah.

RW: I'd like to see that one more time.

CW: Are you doing any other playing otherwise?

RW: No. I sing where I work. The Fries band – they pop in there every once in a while. I'll be singing, and they'll be singing –

CW: At the hardware store?

RW: Yeah, hardware store.

CW: [*Laughs*].

RW: You'd have to come in there to believe this hardware store

CW: Yeah.

RW: It's like going back in time.

CW: I know that Ace there, that stores been there for –

RW: For two hundred years. Yeah, it used to be an old feed and grain.

CW: Yeah, it still looks like one.

RW: Exactly. It's a huge store and the acoustics in there are pretty good [*laughs*]. My boss has been great, they've all been good. He said, "Rick, it'd be different if you were terrible at what you do" [*laughs*]. But I enjoy it – the people that come in there. People

will come up to me and go, “Hey, you know this song?”, “Well, I’ll tell you what, and I’ll see if I can sing along with it”. Usually, I’ll get them to sing, too, so that’s pretty neat. Now you’ve got one or two or maybe ten people all singing the same song, and you’re part of it.

CW: So, you’ve always got a guitar handy?

RW: Oh yeah, I got a guitar, my harps up there –

CW: Really [*laughs*]?

RW: Yeah, I’ve got some sound going through the place.

CW: Well, that’s no secret [*laughing*].

RW: I got a little amplifier back there.

CW: And a boss whose –

RW: Yeah, he’s pretty cool.

CW: Yeah, sounds like it.

RW: And the supervision – the supervisors, they came in there and they just shake their head at me, you know? But they see the costumers that’s been coming in there for years and they’re diggin’ it. So, they’re actually coming in – eat popcorn, we got a popcorn machine in there - so they eat popcorn, drink a pop, listen to some live entertainment just about every day [*laughs*].

CW: Right.

RW: It's pretty neat.

CW: That's pretty cool.

RW: It is. I've never worked [*laughs*] in such a fun place. You know?

CW: Right, right.

RW: Because it's something I enjoy doing.

CW: Yeah, yeah.

RW: And I get my work done, plus I get to sing.

CW: Right, right.

RW: I get to see people. It's fun.

CW: Right.

RW: This old guy came in there, ninety-four years old, and he called me young man. He goes, "Hey young man, can you help?" [*laughs*]. I said, "Young man?" I said, "I'm headed toward seventy, man." He goes "Well, I'm ninety-four years old", I go "Really?", he goes "World War II". I go, "Next thing you're going to be telling me is that's your motorcycle's sitting out there", he goes "My wife wouldn't let me ride it today, but I've been riding since World War II."

CW: Right, right.

RW: I said, "You're ninety-four years old and you're out riding?" He goes, "Yeah, but I don't kick it anymore, I just press a button." [*Laughs*].

CW: Right, right [*laughing*].

RW: You should've seen this little guy, he couldn't have came up to my shoulders. I'm thinking, "If he's riding a Harley, he couldn't reach the pedals, he'll fall." You know?

CW: Right, right.

RW: But, it's cool. The people that come in there, they vary from ages – seventeen to almost a hundred years old.

CW: Right.

RW: And then they're liking what I'm playing and singing. It's pretty neat.

CW: Yeah.

RW: You have to come up and see it.

CW: That sounds neat.

RW: You're always welcome.

CW: Absolutely. When do you work?

RW: Just about every day. They say "Come on in", you know?

CW: Yeah.

RW: There are days that even if I'm off I'll still go in there just to play a little music.

CW: Well I'm a home owner so I have hardware store needs, so next time I'll have to drive a little further down the road.

RW: I got a twenty percent discount [*laughs*].

CW: Yeah, there's an Ace right by my house actually.

RW: Oh yeah, on Wilmington Pike there.

CW: Yeah, I live right off the street.

RW: Yeah.

CW: Well Rick, it's been great.

RW: Oh yeah, it's been a pleasure.

CW: I'm so glad you came in, I had a nice time talking to you.

RW: Yeah, I did too. Thank you for having me.

CW: Yeah, if you have any other good stories or anecdotes, you know, come out again. We'd love to have you again.

RW: Alright, I appreciate that.

CW: Alright, thank you very much.